

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANAA 01228 210757Z

51

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 EB-07

COME-00 TRSE-00 CIEP-01 INT-05 OES-03 DOTE-00 AID-05

/073 W

----- 119855

R 210630Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5544

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANAA 1228

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, YE, SA

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT HAMD'I'S VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA

1. PRESIDENT HAMD'I RETURNED MAY 17 FROM TWO-DAY VISIT TO RIYADH DURING WHICH HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY FONMIN ASNAG, MINSTATE SALAH AL-MASRI (EX-ROYALIST MINWAR), SAADA GOVERNOR LTC HUSAYN SHARAF AL-KIBSI, AND OTHERS.

2. ACCORDING YAR PRESS RELEASE ROLLOWING RETURN, HAMD'I RECEIVED IMPRESSIVE TURNOUT AT RIYADH AIRPORT, INCLUDING KING KHALID, CROWN PRINCE FAHD, SECOND DEPUTY PRIMIN PRINCE ABDALLAH, AND MODA PRINCE SULTAN. HAMD'I AND PARTY SPENT MAY 15 IN MEETING WITH SAG LEADERS AND PERFORMED "UMRA" PILGRIMAGE RITES IN MECCA MAY 16.

3. ACCORDING TO PRESS RELEASE, SAG DURING VISIT AGREED TO EXPEDITE ACTION ON NUMBER OF PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PROJECTS IN YEMEN: JIZAN-HODEIDA AND NAJLAN-SAADA ROADS WHICH WILL LINK YEMEN TO REST OF ARAB WORLD, PETROLEUM REFINERY, AND EXPANSION OF WATER WELL

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PAGE 02 SANAA 01228 210757Z

DRILLING PROGRAM. SAG ADDITIONALLY AGREED TO CONSTRUCT 300

KILOMETERS OF ROADS IN YAR, TO INCLUDE STRATEGICALLY IMPORTANT ROAD FROM RADA' TO SOUTHERN BORDER CITY OF BAYDA. SAG ALSO REAFFIRMED THAT IT WOULD CONTINUE TO MEET SIZEABLE YAR BUDGET DEFICIT.

4. COMMENT: VISIT WAS CONNECTED WITH APRIL INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS, I.E. DISMISSAL OF ABU LUHUM ARMY COMMANDERS AND DEP ARMED FORCES CIC ABU SHAWARIB WHICH IN TURN LED TO TENSION BETWEEN HAMDI AND CONSERVATIVE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT SHAIKH ABDALLAH AL-AHMAR, ABU SHAWARIB'S BROTHER-IN-LAW AND LONG TIME SAUDI PROTEGE. VISIT SEEN BY LOCAL OBSERVERS AS SAG ENDORSEMENT HAMDI ACTIONS (NEITHER ABU LUHUMS NOR ABU SHAWARIB WERE TRUSTED BY SAG) WHICH HAVE SECONDARILY ENHANCED POWER OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT AT EXPENSE FEUDAL TRIBAL ELEMENTS LONG BACKED BY SAG. THIS HAS BEEN PLEASANT SURPRISE TO MANY LOCAL OBSERVERS WHO PREVIOUSLY HAVE DEPLOYED SAG BACKING FOR BACKWARD-LOOKING CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS. WHETHER SAG ACTIONS CAN BE RELATED TO MORE FLEXIBLE OUTLOOK SAG CROWN PRINCE FAHD, AS SOME OBSERVERS WOULD SUGGEST, HELPFUL SAUDI ROLE IN THIS TENSE SITUATION HAS GREATLY LESSENERED POSSIBILITY OF NASTY CONFRONTATION BETWEEN MODERATES AND TRIBAL CONSERVATIVES.
SCOTES

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